

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Tennessee Fish and Wildlife Commission

**FROM:** Ed Carter, Executive Director  
Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency

**SUBJECT:** TFWC Committee Meetings  
Thursday, May 17, 2018 @ 1 p.m.

TFWC Commission Meeting  
Friday – May 18, 2018 @ 9 a.m.

Region II - Ray Bell Office Building  
Nashville

**DATE:** May 11, 2018

---

The upcoming TFWC meetings are scheduled to meet on Thursday, May 17 beginning at 1 p.m. and Friday, May 18 at 9 a.m. in Nashville at the Region II - Ray Bell Building.

A reception in honor of John Mayer, who is retiring with 34 years with the agency, will be held in the Director's Conference Room from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the TWRA Headquarters on Thursday, May 17.

Our 2018 TFWC September meeting will be held in Knoxville at the Holiday Inn at Cedar Bluff. For any commission members choosing to extend their reservation to the weekend in order to attend the home football game at the University of Tennessee, vs. Florida, the hotel requires a 2-night minimum stay for both Friday and Saturday to receive a \$229 rate over these high demand dates. Room rate of \$98 September 19 & 20 and \$229 Friday/Saturday September, 21 & 22. Please contact Michelle Arline as soon as possible, if you're interested in extending your stay at 865-693-1011. If Ms. Arline is not available, just tell them that you are coming for the Tennessee Fish and Wildlife Commission. **The reservation due date for everyone is August 29, 2018.**

The minutes from the April 27, 2018 Commission meeting held in Nashville at the Region II - Ray Bell Building are included. We're providing the following link for you to review May's memo and agenda items.

<https://www.tn.gov/twra/twra-commission.html>

The following are brief explanations of agenda items:

## **WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**The following is an update on items the TFWC asked TWRA to consider as recommendations for the 2018-19 and 2019-20 Hunting and Trapping Seasons:**

### Allow deer hunters to incidentally take bobcats during deer muzzleloader season

The Agency is not recommending this change due to the unpopularity of this idea with fur-trappers, and the fact it would lead to an inconsistency with the start of other furbearer hunting seasons.

### Velvet antler deer hunt

The Agency is not recommending this change due to the following concerns:

- Lack of understand/knowledge on whether or not deer hunters desire it as a whole
- Defining a velvet antlered deer will be extra challenging, having to account for shedding of velvet. And, harvest of all antlered deer would likely have to be allowed.
- Potential for meat spoilage due to hot temperatures this time of year
- Additional manpower required for enforcement
- Potential for increased poaching
- Processors are not yet operational for the year to accommodate hunters

### Begin raccoon harvest season later in the year (September as opposed to July) in East Tennessee counties

The Agency is recommending this change due to public comments from the E. Tennessee area requesting it. The September opener will apply to counties in the Eastern Time Zone.

### A spring turkey bag limit per WMA for all WMAs

The Agency is not recommending such a change. WMAs vary greatly in size, habitat, etc., therefore hunting regulations vary from area to area. Harvest data analyses do not indicate a need to have one specific bag limit which applies to all WMAs.

### Eliminating bonus turkeys

The Agency is not recommending eliminating bonus turkeys. Bonus turkeys are only available on 11 WMAs, five of which are partner-owned properties where the partner prefers the turkeys be bonus birds. Additionally, turkeys considered "bonus" only made up of 0.5% (186) of the harvest in 2017 (34,444), and many of the bonus birds are on youth and wheelchair hunts.

### Eighteen inch inside spread requirement antlered deer on President's Island, Moss Island, John Tully, and Ernest Rice Sr. WMAs

The Agency is recommending a 20 inch outside spread requirement, instead of the 22 inch required shared at the April meeting.

#### Allow gun deer hunting at Wolf River WMA-Unit 1

The Agency is not recommending this change to prevent deer hunters from interfering with small game hunters who have very limited hunting opportunities on West Tennessee WMAs. Safety concerns about this proposal have also been raised by locals in the area.

#### Requiring deer hunters to possess an elk permit before being able to incidentally take an elk in non-restoration counties

The Agency is unable to require deer hunters who may incidentally take an elk to possess an elk permit. Licenses required for deer hunting are all that can be required by the Agency.

Proc. 18-02 Migratory Gamebird Hunting Seasons and Regulations

Proc. 18-03 Statewide Furbearer Hunting and Trapping Seasons and Bag Limits

Proc. 18-04 Statewide Small Game Hunting Seasons and Bag Limits

Proc. 18-06 Wildlife Management Areas, Public Hunting Areas, and Refuges, Hunting Seasons, Limits and Miscellaneous Regulations

Proc. 18-07 Statewide Big Game Hunting Seasons and Bag Limit

Proc. 18-08 Hunting Seasons and Bag Limits on Select National Wildlife Refuges and Other Federal Areas

### **BOATING & LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE**

**Proc. 18-05 Manner and Means of Hunting, Taking and Trapping** – The summarized changes for Manner and Means of Hunting, Taking and Trapping Proclamation 18-05 are: Legal hunting devices will be updated to include falconry for small game and migratory birds, air guns .35 caliber and larger for big game, legalizing a pre-charged pneumatic gun which shoots an arrow, during archery season, for persons possessing one of the Agency disabled licenses and for anyone hunting during the modern gun seasons. The proclamation will also be amended to prohibit unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) for hunting any wildlife, and to prohibit the use of any cervid urine, except synthetic, for hunting. A change in the rules for big game check-in will be proposed to allow for electronic check-in of bears unless otherwise prohibited such as special refuge hunts. Lt. Col. Cape Taylor, Boating and Law Enforcement Assistant Chief

### **BUDGET COMMITTEE**

**Budget Expansion FY18** – for Tier 1 BIG Project- City of Knoxville – Vol Navy Docks (\$400,000). This expansion is for a Tier 1 grant project with two years' worth of Tier 1 funding being accomplished by the City of Knoxville. This money is 100% federal money with all of the match requirements being supplied by the recipients. This project will renovate the transient docks and gangways on the Tennessee River known as the Vol Navy Docks in downtown Knoxville, Tennessee. Col. Darren Rider, Boating & Law Enforcement Chief

**Budget Expansion FY18** – Clinch River Pool Mussel Survey 7775 (\$21,000). This is all federal money from the USFWS for mussel work in the Clinch River. The un-impounded portion of the Clinch River above Norris Reservoir harbors more extant populations of federally endangered species than any stream in North America. It contains a diverse mussel assemblage of 46 extant species, with 24 mussels listed as federally endangered. The funds provided by the USFWS Asheville, NC Field Office will cover survey costs of the under surveyed Clinch River pool

habitats below the TN/VA state line near Horton Ford downstream to the vicinity of the Highway 31,33,66 Sneedville Bridge. This survey will provide population status data for federally endangered shiny pigtoe, fine-rayed pigtoe, pink mucket, and proposed endangered pyramid pigtoe, and other mussel species, for propagation, culture, and genetics research efforts in support of recovery actions for these and other encountered mussel species. Dave McKinney, Environmental Services Chief Pandy English, Biodiversity Assistant Chief

**Budget Expansion FY18 – (\$460,000)** requesting approval to expand Budget 3708 to accept Wetlands dollars to close out 15 old gas and oil wells on TWRA properties in Scott and Morgan counties, including well closures on both the McCart Tract and Gunsight Mountain. These well closures must comply with EPA/TDEC standards. Dave McKinney, Environmental Services Chief Pandy English, Biodiversity Assistant Chief

**Budget Expansion FY18 - FY18 Budget Expansion for Paris Landing Pier (1347) -TWRA is receiving \$75,000 from Paris Landing State Park (TDEC) for their contribution to the new pier that is being built near the Paris Landing Marina. No matching dollars are required. Frank Fiss, Fisheries Chief**

**Budget Expansion FY18 – FY19 Budget Expansion for Asian Carp Incentive Program - Request to fund the Asian Carp Harvest Incentive Program (ACHIP) from the Marine Fuel Tax Fund. TWRA is requesting a two-year budget (FY19 and FY20) for a total of \$500,000. The incentive programs are designed to promote the commercial harvest of Asian carp in Kentucky, Barkley, Cheatham, and Old Hickory reservoirs. The incentive program has two components: a subsidy that gives \$0.07/lb to fishers and \$0.03/lb to the buyers, and the allotment of free netting materials to qualifying participants. This budget request would allow TWRA to subsidize the removal of 2 million pounds of carp annually. No matching dollars are required. Frank Fiss, Fisheries Chief**

**Budget Expansion FY18 – (\$150,000)** requesting approval to expand Budget 9102. These funds are 100% federal and are intended to facilitate continued work on landscape conservation in the Gulf Coastal Plains and Ozarks region, via a third party grant(s). Greg Wathen, Director's Office

**Financial Report -** The standard financial report will be presented. Ken Tarkington, Chief Procurement and MVM

#### **GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

**Rule 1660-01-32 Rules and Regulation for In Need of Management, Threatened, and Endangered Species (Filing Form for Stay of Effective Date on Rules, Withdrawal of Stay, and Withdrawal of Rules) –** The stay of Rule 1660-01-32 is being presented to the Commission as the result of a request made by both chairs of the Joint Government Operations Committee in the Legislature. The stay as proposed is sought in order to provide the Department of Environment and Conservation and other additional interested parties the additional time that is necessary for those groups to work out the regulatory process and potential impacts resulting from the threatened and endangered lists in the newly promulgated rule. Chris Richardson, Assistant Director

**There is no action scheduled for committees not listed.**

Please feel free to call if you need additional information. We look forward to seeing you on May 17 & 18.

EC:dw